

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
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TRSE-00 OMB-01 ACDA-12 /090 W
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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5725
SECDEF WASHDC
INFO USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
CINCUSNAVEUR
COMSIXTHFLT
USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 06908

E. O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: UK TS PINR
SUBJECT: SOVIET USE OF MENZEL-BOURGUIBA DOCKYARDS,
BIZERTE

REF: A) LONDON 2055; B) STATE 8286

1. MOBERLY, AUS, FCO, HAS INFORMED POL-MIL ATTACHE THAT HMG USED JUDD'S LATE MARCH VISIT TO TUNISIA TO EMPHASIZE, INTER ALIA, BRITISH CONCERN ABOUT THE SOVIET USE OF BIZERTE DOCKYARD (REFTEL A).
2. JUDD RAISED THE ISSUE WITH BRAHIM TURKI AND ALSO WITH ABDULLAH FARHAT. THE TUNISIAN RESPONSE WAS PREDICTABLE AND AGAIN THEY REFERRED TO THE NEED TO PROVIDE WORK FOR THE DOCKYARD, PLAYING DOWN THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FACILITIES THEY ARE MAKING AVAILABLE TO THE SOVIETS.

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3. ABDULLAH FARHAT TOOK THE LINE THAT THE SOVIET VISITS WERE MERELY MAINTENANCE AND VICTUALLING STOPS AND THAT THERE IS NO AGREEMENT TO ACCEPT A FIXED NUMBER OF SOVIET SHIPS. EACH APPLICATION FOR A VISIT IS CONSIDERED ON A CASE BY CASE BASIS. FARHAT TOLD JUDD THAT HE PERSONALLY VETTED EACH SOVIET APPLICATION AND THAT, OUT OF A NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS, THUS FAR HE HAD

APPROVED ONLY TWO OR THREE. FARHAT AGAIN STRESSED THAT THE BIZERTE FACILITIES ARE AVAILABLE TO OTHERS BUT THAT WE HAD DECLINED THEM.

4. WHILE THE FCO ACCEPTS THAT THE IMMEDIATE RESULTS OF PRESSURE ON THE TUNISIANS MAY APPEAR INSUBSTANTIAL, THEY SUSPECT THE WEIGHT OF NATO CONCERN IS GETTING THROUGH TO THE TUNISIAN GOVERNMENT. THE EGYPTIANS HAVE TOLD LONDON THAT THEY HAVE SPOKEN TO THE TUNISIANS AND EXPRESSED THEIR CONCERN. MOBERLY FEELS CONFIDENT THAT RECENT EVIDENCE OF A REDUCED RATE OF ACCESS TO THE BIZERTE DRYDOCKS TOGETHER WITH THE REPORTED TUNISIAN TURN DOWN OF A SOVIET REQUEST TO STATION TECHNICIANS IN THE DOCKYARD, AND THE GRANTING OF ONLY ONE-THIRD OF SOVIET REQUESTS FOR USE OF THE FACILITIES, ARE ALL POINTERS TO THE USEFULNESS OF RECENT DISCUSSIONS, INCLUDING JUDD'S REPRESENTATIONS.

BREWSTER

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NNN

Message Attributes

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